

April 4, 2011

My name is Jean-Ellen M. Trapani and I support Raised Bill No. 6557, **AN ACT CONCERNING LIABILITY FOR THE RECREATIONAL USE OF LANDS**, speaking as a private citizen. I am an avid kayaker and also enjoy hiking and walking. I travel all over this beautiful state to do so. Hoping to understand if my enjoyment was shared by other people in Connecticut, I found a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2005 – 2010 prepared by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and dated Sept. 2005 on the DEP's website ([http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323864&depNav\\_GID=1642](http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323864&depNav_GID=1642) ). On pages IV and V from the Executive Summary it says:

Connecticut residents participate in a wide array of outdoor recreational activities. This SCORP therefore undertook an assessment of residents' demand for thirty land-based, water-based and winter sports outdoor recreational activities. The Citizen Demand Survey results show that almost all households (93.8%) participate in land-based recreational activities, 85.3% of households participate in water-based activities, and 54.2% participate in winter activities. The survey results verify that a very high percentage of Connecticut residents participate in a wide range of outdoor recreational activities. The top ten activities in descending order of individual participation rates are: walking/running/hiking, beach activities, visiting historic sites or museums, swimming in freshwater or saltwater, swimming in pools, biking, bird and wildlife watching, sledding, camping, and canoeing/kayaking/tubing.

The frequency with which residents engage in these activities varies widely. For example, a walker or runner likely practices that activity more frequently than a visitor to historic sites and museums makes such trips. To capture the variation in the frequency with which the various activities are engaged in, and thus to get a more accurate picture of recreational demand, a measure called the use frequency index (UFI) was developed for this SCORP. Loosely defined, the UFI is a product of the percentage of residents practicing an activity times a measure of the frequency of participation. Chapter 7 of this SCORP presents the UFIs for the thirty measured activities, first on a statewide basis, but also by county and by socio-economic category of municipalities. The twelve most popular activities, listed with their respective UFIs to give a sense of their relative participation intensities, are: running/walking/hiking (95.3), swimming in pools (63.7), beach activities (62.0), swimming in freshwater or saltwater (54.7), biking (40.9), visiting historic sites and museums (36.7), sledding (26.8), basketball/volleyball (22.2), motor boating (21.8), canoeing/kayaking/tubing (20.8), golf (20.2), and camping (20.0).

Going back to the main web page which describes the report, it says:

The SCORP is a planning document which assesses both the demand for and the supply of outdoor recreational facilities statewide. The National Park Service officially approved Connecticut's new SCORP in September 2005. Using the data and insights obtained through the preparation of the SCORP, both the state and its

municipalities will be able to more effectively provide and improve outdoor recreational opportunities for Connecticut's residents and visitors. The approval of Connecticut's SCORP by the National Park Service allows the state to be eligible to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, through which the Department of Environmental Protection receives funding to acquire, develop and improve outdoor recreational properties. Twenty-five percent of the federal funds received will be passed on to Connecticut's municipalities through a competitive grant application process in order to develop additional recreational facilities at the local level.

I am hoping that you will consider this information as evidence of very wide-spread support by the citizens of this state for access to outdoor recreational opportunities. The report also discusses the physical, educational, psychological and economic benefits of outdoor recreation. It also lists recommendations, strategies, and priorities. I'd like to urge you to read this document or at least the Executive Summary.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today.